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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT UPDATE

REF: KHARTOUM 1451

¶1. (SBU) Summary: In a September 28 meeting with poloff, UNAMID officials reiterated the belief that 60% deployment is possible by the end of 2008. Road and rail transport of COE remains ongoing, but the lack of an air bridge and adequate air assets remain a significant obstacles to accelerated deployment. To fill the void left by PAE's impending departure, UNAMID has proposed that the UN Office For Project Services (UNOPS) take responsibility for project implementation, while hiring of PAE local staff and relying on a mix of local and regional contractors to complete camp construction. Such an arrangement will be much less efficient than a turnkey provider such as PAE, they said, and could take until late 2009 to put into place. Until then, troops will have to live in "austere" conditions. UNAMID is also actively engaging in contingency planning for a possible Phase 5 evacuation in October, which is drawing time and resources away from deployment issues. End Summary.

DEPLOYMENT UPDATES

¶2. (SBU) On September 28 poloff met separately with Wolfgang Weiszegger, Deputy Director for Mission Support, and Colonel NMT Stafford, Chief, J5 Plans for a follow-on update on UNAMID deployment issues (Reftel). The latest estimates for enabling units scheduled to deploy include a 350 person Bangladeshi multi-role logistics unit to Nyala on October 17-20 (an advance party deployed on September 21) and a 150 person Egyptian medium transport unit to Nyala on October 27-30, according to Weiszegger. Stafford noted that 330 person Pakistani Level III hospital unit to Nyala and 150 person Pakistani engineering company to Geneina are scheduled to deploy in late October or early November.

¶3. (SBU) A big push is being made to deploy Ethiopian troops, including enabling units comprised of a 300 person multi-role logistics unit and a 120 person medium transport unit, but no flight dates have been set yet. The same applies for the remainder of the Ethiopian infantry battalion to be deployed in Kublus and Sealeh. Latest estimates for the deployment of 600+ person Egyptian infantry battalion to Um Kadada are late October to early November. Stafford noted that pre-deployment reconnaissance for the Ethiopian second battalion (to Graida and Buram) was completed from September 17-21, while reconnaissance from the Tanzanian battalion headed to Muhajeria and Khor Achebe is scheduled for October 1-5. UN/DFS and DPKO remain at odds as to the speed of deployment for reinforcements of former AMIS battalions, with UN/DFS pushing for accelerated light deployment while DPKO is taking a more cautious approach, said Stafford, who was frustrated by the indecision in New York.

¶4. (SBU) Deployment remains subject to delivery of the contingent-owned equipment (COE). Geographically, the biggest transport difficulties lie in West Darfur (where the majority of Ethiopian troops will deploy.) Weiszegger noted that UNAMID transport contractors have resisted moving equipment by road there

as a result of the rainy season, despite the fact that other traffic has made it through. "We're trying to convince them otherwise," he said. Elsewhere, Weiszegger noted that container shipments are ongoing both by road and by rail (though they have ground to a halt for the long Eid holiday.) He stated that the entire backlog of freight in El Obeid should be cleared within two weeks. UNAMID contractors claim they can clear the rest within 45-60 days, which will provide a substantial boost towards a targeted deployment of 60 or even 70% by the end of 2008.

15. (SBU) Weiszegger's biggest concern regarding deployment issues is the lack of an air bridge and adequate air assets. He noted that while UNAMID has received the green light from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for assistance in upgrading the three airports, discussions are ongoing, and no timetable has been set. As such, airport upgrades "won't have an effect on accelerated deployment", though they will help eventually, he said. The cost estimates for projects at each airport are somewhere between U.S. \$10 and \$15 million each. The one upgrade that could produce an immediate impact is the opening of a new airstrip in Geneina, but it is only able to handle small aircraft (though with future upgrades Geneina will eventually be Antonov AN124 capable.)

CAMP CONSTRUCTION AND PAE

16. (SBU) With regard to camp construction, Weiszegger stated that PAE has been making good progress on all three "supercamps," noting that the 1250-person camp in El Fasher is near completion, awaiting only the delivery of fuel and water tanks, currently in customs clearance. Both the Chinese and Egyptian engineering contingents have been making significant contributions to camp construction, he

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said, and are expected to play a continuing "self-help" role in the post-PAE era. UNAMID is also requesting that all new battalions deploy with a light engineering capacity of 50 to 100 men to help make up for the loss of PAE.

16. (SBU) The lack of a replacement for PAE remains a significant concern, according to Weiszegger. With no alternative turnkey provider on the horizon, UNAMID has proposed to UN headquarters in New York that that UN Office For Project Services (UNOPS) take responsibility for project implementation. (Note: UNOPS provides project management, procurement and other support services to United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, governments and non-governmental organizations. It became an independent, self-financing organization in 1995. End Note.) The current thinking calls for UNOPS engineering capacity to be combined with the hiring of PAE local staff (non-compete clauses in contracts of their expatriate staff may prevent them from being hired,) and to rely on a mix of local and regional contractors to complete the work, though he noted that this was much less efficient than a single provider such as PAE. Until new contracts are in place ("I don't see that happening until before the end of the 2009,") troops will have to deploy on brownfield sites with only the most basic infrastructure. Weiszegger lamented that these conditions would be "austere." UNOPS has a very mixed reputation in Sudan in terms of efficiency.

GOS COOPERATION

17. (SBU) With regard to cooperation with the GOS, Weiszegger noted that it had been quite forthcoming in the past several months. "There's been great progress in securing additional parking spaces" for UNAMID aircraft in both Nyala and El Fasher Airports, in addition to keeping the airports open longer. GOS authorities have been accommodating on visa and customs clearances, he said, with the exception of visas for nationals of the United States, Canada and Denmark. No progress has been made obtaining visas for U.S. military personnel, as UNAMID follow-up inquiries have not been met with a response.

18. (SBU) Weiszegger noted that the GOS has also been very accommodating in regard to PAE, even after its contract expired. Over 80 flights delivering vital cargo equipment were granted flight

clearances over the past several months (after the contract expired in July), which as critical in making progress on the supercamps. Weiszegger stated that while there were typically some problems with lower-level authorities, such difficulties were quickly resolved when pushed to more senior levels. He credited a joint technical committee monthly meeting and working groups on specific issues such as visas for eliminating bureaucratic impediments.

ICC CONTINGENCY PLANNING

¶9. (SBU) Stafford noted that UNAMID is now focused on contingency planning for a "Phase 5" evacuation in the lead-up to the potential issuance of an ICC arrest warrant against President Bashir, and this has lamentably taken away attention from deployment. He briefly outlined draft evacuation plans to sequentially move all troops to battalion positions, move battalions to sector headquarters and then co-locate, with potential safe havens in Cairo, Addis Ababa and Entebbe. Information is currently being gathered on the number of people and, more importantly, UNAMID's capacity to move them in the event of an evacuation. The latter would be completed within a week, according to Stafford.

¶10. (SBU) Comment: UNAMID's proposal to use UNOPS for the management and implementation of camp construction is a welcome development, if only because there is no other plan in place. Whether UNOPS has the capacity or ability to manage such an ambitious operation remains to be seen, but camp construction is sure to experience severe delays regardless. UNAMID's work on contingency planning for a Phase 5 evacuation, while pushing forward on accelerated deployment, is a familiar paradox last seen in July after the initial ICC arrest warrant request was made. A Phase 5 evacuation would, of course, be a devastating blow to reaching deployment goals.

FERNANDEZ